



## Arlington Council on Aging

### Agenda

Date: Thursday September 17, 2020 Time: 6:00 pm

**Location:** Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting will be conducted virtually via Zoom, following the rules set forth by the Governor's Executive Order on Remote Participation. These meetings are open to the public and all are welcome. Please call 781-316-3401 or e-mail [KShah@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:KShah@town.arlington.ma.us) for the link to join the virtual meeting which can be accessed by computer with internet access or by telephone for audio access only.

Kristine Shah, Executive Director

Michael Quinn, Chair

Marge Vanderhill, Secretary

Claire Foley, ASA Liaison

The Council's primary responsibilities are to design, promote, and implement programs and services to address the needs of the community's elder population, and to coordinate existing services in the community.

1. Call to order
2. Citizen's Open Forum
3. Minutes of the June, 2020 meeting for approval
4. Executive Director's Report
5. Report of the Chair
6. Minuteman Senior Services Report: Marge Vanderhill
7. ASA Liaison Report: Claire Foley
8. Old Business
  - a. Open Board Member Position has been Posted
9. New Business
  - a. Vote on Sevyan Personal Needs and Sevyan Dental Program fund transfers
10. Adjourn

**Next meeting: October 15, 2020**

## **Executive Director's Report**

**Kristine Shah**

### **I. Updates on Programs/Services**

#### **a. Nutrition and Food Access**

- i. Arlington EATS, Council on Aging, and Food Link continue to work together during the pandemic to get Arlington residents access to food safely. The home-delivery only model will continue through the fall in order to keep our most vulnerable from congregating in groups at EATS market. Numbers of home deliveries continue to be 220-250 weekly. At least 70% of these deliveries are to older adults.
- ii. The COA launched our annual Farm Share program beginning in June and continuing through October. Senior Work off volunteers deliver local, organic farm shares to 50 older adults in Arlington each Wednesday.
- iii. COA social workers have distributed 68 coupons to local farmers markets (valued at \$25 each), this is an annual program through Minuteman Senior Services.
- iv. COA is exploring how we can continue running our Thanksgiving Day meal delivery program amid the pandemic. Details will be provided by the October board meeting.

#### **b. Outreach & Emotional Support**

- i. The list of older residents receiving weekly telephone calls through our "Telephone Call Reassurance Program" is growing. We have also launched intergenerational pen pal programs.
- ii. The COA has collected and distributed over 5,000 fabric masks to seniors in Arlington.
- iii. Pre-approved COA volunteers who are not in the high risk population for COVID-19 continue to grocery shop, pick up prescriptions and run essential errands for high risk individuals.

#### **c. Virtual Programs**

- i. Fitness Classes: Live exercise and chair yoga classes are conducted via zoom on Monday, Wednesday & Fridays. Recorded tai chi classes air weekly and are regularly updated on ACMI. Over 60 individuals attend the weekly zoom fitness classes.
- ii. Other virtual programming continues to grow and includes: Bingo, Art Therapy, Sing, intergenerational book club, LGBTQ+ Friends and Allies, Shakespeare and other social groups have moved their monthly meetings to zoom and are growing weekly. We have also started hosting "drive through" events where residents RSVP for a grab and go event, such as ice cream social, and can say a quick hello to COA staff while they drive through. We are holding a pumpkin patch Halloween event in October in this manner and look to partner with local restaurants to provide some dine and dash events through the fall.
- iii. This time of year we are busy scheduling virtual SHINE appointments regarding open enrollment. We are also assisting many people with fuel assistance applications in a socially distant manor this year. The following other programs/services are running virtually (using zoom or phone): Legal assistance/appointments, Social Work appointments, SNAP applications, Housing Authority Application assistance; and financial assistance will begin in October.

- iv. Due to overwhelming need, we held an outdoor, socially distant podiatry clinic with two podiatrists on September 14.

**d. Transportation**

- i. Medical Ride requests are being fulfilled with the help of Arlington Belmont Taxi and Uber. Thanks to a private transportation grant received from a local family in the spring, we have been able to fund these rides and only charge the senior \$10 each way for out of town Medical Rides, the same charge as our Medical Escort Program. Due to the Pandemic, the Medical Escort program has been on hold for the safety of our volunteers.
- ii. The COA van began running again in June. All 4 COA van drivers are on the road, one day a week each. Van rides were free through the summer, regular pricing went in to effect as of September 1. Each driver follows new protocols with the goals of keeping our drivers and riders safe.

**e. Grant Updates**

- i. We received a \$15,000 grant from CDBG through their special Covid funding cycle. This grant allowed us to purchase 40 Chromebooks and hot spots. We are currently in the process of distributing these Chromebooks and launching a buddy program to teach older adults how to use new virtual technology.
- ii. Our annual grant application to the Symmes Medical Use Non-Profit Corp was fully funded at \$15,000 for medical transportation costs (up from \$13,000 last year).
- iii. We received an unrestricted \$8,000 gift which has been put in our "Gift Fund." This will help fund the costs of our fitness instructors. Our virtual fitness classes have been offered free of charge through the pandemic.
- iv. We have applied for a \$46,000 grant from The Sanborn Foundation to continuing to fund cancer related transportation for all Arlington Residents.

**f. Property Tax Relief**

- i. Applications have been updated and are available on the COA website for the 2020-21 Volunteer Tax Work off Program (Deadline October 15) and the Elderly and Disabled Tax Relief Fund (Deadline January 31).

**g. 2020 Arlington for All Ages 5K**

- i. After much deliberation, we decided to hold the annual tradition virtually in 2020. 60+ runners participated and over \$2,000 was raised for the capital campaign. Special thanks to Michael Quinn and Joe Curro for participating in our Zoom kick off for the event on race day. Our singing group recorded the national anthem which was shared during the kick off and we also held a drive through ice cream sundae grab & go event on Sunday afternoon for runners. The race winner was our very own board chair and we were thrilled that our top runner in the 90+ age category, Dick Smith, participated again this year, with a time of just over 70 minutes!

**h. Sevyan Charitable Funds Request**

- i. Please see attached updates and requests for FY21.

**i. Other**

- i. We welcomed Michelle Tse as our new Supervisor of Volunteers and Transportation in July. Michelle has been a wonderful addition to the team and has quickly adapted.
- ii. Construction continues on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors of 27 Maple St and COA staff, along with ASA offices, anticipate being off of the ground floor (and working on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor) in the next couple of weeks.